



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Regional Development

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Road Traffic (Speed Limits) Bill:
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA

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also possibly play a part in contributing to public health through encouraging more people to walk and cycle to work and on everyday journeys.

I am going to give you some information gathered from the stakeholder engagement to date. I hope to have another stakeholder event to bring together those who made a submission in order to tighten up some of their thoughts. The consultation process conducted during Conall McDevitt's attempt to bring the Bill before the House received 41 responses. I am aware that the Committee Clerk received the summary of those responses. If the Committee wants the full responses, I can certainly pass them on. Of those 41 responses, almost all agreed that there was a case for reforming the current speed limits, and that that would clearly lead to a reduction in the accidents and fatalities on our roads.

Many respondents believed that a lower speed limit on some roads would increase the number of road users, such as cyclists and pedestrians, thus clearly suggesting the benefits to public health. The majority of respondents stated that they believed that the proposal should apply to only the classification of different roads. However, there appears to be some confusion about the classification of roads, which may have impacted on the results and some consultation responses. That also highlights an issue with defining where the 20 mph speed limits should be and may be applicable. As anticipated prior to consultation, this may have implications for the direction of the Bill going forward. I made the point earlier about any future engagement that I will have with the sector and the Committee.

There has been some disagreement on how a 20 mph limit may be implemented, with 45% stating that increased signage would be the preferred means, while 35% disagreed with that approach. Many argued that there is a need for a complete-street approach, incorporating a package of measures to slow traffic down. They said that a more holistic approach should be considered. The key issues arising from the consultation approach are in relation to where and how the speed limit should be implemented. It was generally agreed that the proposed legislation would impact positively on human rights and equality of opportunity.

I have some general comments. There is overwhelming support for legislation. There is a need for a complete-street approach, incorporating a package of measures to slow traffic down. Clearly, public awareness and education is essential. Some people said that a blanket approach is maybe not the most appropriate way of legislating. However, priority areas could clearly be identified. There is a big debate between 20 mph zones and a speed limit. It may be more appropriate to have zones as opposed to blanket legislation. There is some confusion about types of roads. Rural roads may not be appropriate for the scheme. Others argue that 20 mph limits should be a starting point, and that higher speeds should be argued for in certain circumstances.

In most submissions, there was clear support for public health benefits and reductions in fatalities and accidents. Clearly, enforcement may be problematic if we do not have a good education and public awareness campaign. There needs to be cooperation with the statutory bodies, particularly the police. Many people are strongly in favour of street design, furniture and other means to force a reduction in speed. We can see in our own communities a number of the calming measures that make a difference.

I now come to some of the specific issues raised by stakeholders. In response to the question of whether a reduced speed limit in designated areas would result in a reduced number of accidents and fatalities, the communication from the key stakeholders Sustrans and Northern Ireland Greenways highlighted that a reduction in speed, as well as reducing the number of fatalities and injuries, would reduce the fear or perception of danger, which limits the independence of people, particularly those with disabilities and the increasing older generation. They also raised the issue of good pavement design. They stated that that empowers and gives confidence to pedestrians and cyclists alike, as does reducing speed. All road users would then see themselves as equals. That is an important point that a lot of people made. It is a balance that engenders some mutual respect.

A 20 mph speed limit in Portsmouth was used in one particular case study by Sustrans. That cited a reduction in traffic casualties by 22%. I encourage the Committee to look at the Portsmouth model. To increase the number of cyclists and pedestrians, which is a goal cited by many Departments, including the Department of the Environment and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to name just two, we need to make roads safer.

Fundamentally, I am taking the Bill forward to make roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists. I believe that this goal will be realised with the implementation of the 20 mph Bill. Nearly three quarters of all respondents to the previous consultation felt that reducing the speed limit on designated urban

residential streets would increase the number of cyclists, pedestrians and other road users. That would be due to the increased confidence and the removal of fear, particularly from older people and families with children.

However, if we are to increase the number of other road users, we must look seriously at how we promote activities such as cycling. I found out this morning that the Committee is carrying out an inquiry into that. Access to bicycles was a major issue raised by some stakeholders. If we look at the rest of the UK for inspiration, we find that Bristol has had great success in its roll-out of a 20 mph limit in all residential streets by 2015. That followed a very successful pilot scheme, which increased the number of people walking in the 20 mph areas from 10% to 36%. It increased the number of people cycling in the 20 mph zones from 4% to 37%. The Bristol model also showed that residents on busy streets have less than one quarter of the number of local friends compared to those living on similar streets with little traffic. A similar story occurred in Hilden, Germany, where cycling journeys increased by 23% after 20 mph limits were introduced.

The organisation Brake conducted a survey with commuters that revealed that many would be persuaded to cycle if roads were safer — 35% said that they would switch to cycling their commute if the route was less dangerous and 46% said that they would be persuaded to make other local journeys by bike given safer roads. Safer roads and routes to schools may also encourage parents to allow their children to walk or cycle to and from school.

As regards the road-type for such a speed limit proposed by the Bill, I believe that the 20 mph limits should apply to residential roads. When I say "residential roads", I do not mean main thoroughfares; it would have a huge advantage for areas of high-density public housing. That view is supported by the majority of stakeholders. Some 73% of respondents believed that the speed limit should be applied to only residential roads. There is also a common trend that all circumstances should be considered when evaluating the speed limit, with a distance of 800 metres being seen as the maximum before people feel impatient and begin to drive erratically. Places for special consideration should include schools and school gates; residential roads; places where children are at play, such as parks; unclassified roads, and city centres.

Promoting a change in behaviour regarding driving habits is an important part of the proposed Bill. We need to make our roads safer for all road users. A change in driving culture has a major role to play in that. The majority of those consulted believe that reducing the speed limit on designated residential roads would bring consistency to road speeds and reduce the speed of our driving culture.

Many also feel that simply lowering the speed limit is not enough but clearly needs to be backed up with suitable levels of enforcement, education and awareness. The 20 mph limit creates an acceptance of the need to share the road space with other road users and residents. Effective use of signage is another major issue. Sustrans suggested that a package of measures to include stakeholder engagement, effective promotion, driver awareness campaigns and police involvement is crucial and is the best way to proceed. Robust enforcement of the 20 mph limit will be the key to its success. The majority believe that legislation is the best way to address the issue. However, many also agree that it should be teamed with other initiatives and a publicity campaign running parallel to the legislation. Greater encouragement must be given to encourage people to get walking and cycling. As I already said, there is a need to change the culture of driving in residential areas.

Clearly, the financial implications of any proposed legislation is a serious issue that needs to be addressed. This is always the case when public funds are used, particularly in the current financial and economic climate. Portsmouth, the example cited earlier, saw a cost of just over £500,000 to implement the 20 mph limit entirely throughout that major city in England. I believe that the social factors of such a piece of legislation outweigh the cost.

Thank you, Chairperson, for allowing me the time to go into a wee bit more detail on my thoughts. Clearly, my main thrust in going forward will be, and always has been, the need to reduce the number of casualties, particularly fatalities, on our roads. I will finish there.

The Chairperson: Thank you very much indeed, Pat. I will start with one or two questions. First, 41 responses is not a major number for this type of consultation. I think that in Edinburgh — and we spoke to Edinburgh City Council when we were over on other business — there was a very big buy-in to the pilot schemes that it ran. Did the PSNI respond to the consultation? What was its view?

Mr P Ramsey: I think that the PSNI was concerned about enforcement, but I do not view that as such a big issue. The police are presently enforcing a 30 mph zone. I intend to have further engagements

on the possibility of further consultation. I will consider it. I am not rushing to bring the Bill to Second Stage until I feel confident that I have exhausted every measure. I take your point. Clearly, 41 groups across Northern Ireland felt it was important to make a contribution and, of those, 75% felt that it was a valuable piece of legislation. The Committee may undertake a form of consultation. As I said previously, I hope to meet stakeholders, including the police, to get a more definitive response from them.

The Chairperson: The cost is high, whether we like it or not. I think that is the elephant in the room. For the pilot scheme of 40 kilometres in Edinburgh, the signage alone cost £214,000 and, on top of that, ramps had to be put into various areas as well.

I accept that the costs for ramps and stuff such as that are additional. In a city such as Edinburgh, you have cobbled streets, and all that sort of thing, which obviously make for a lot more expense. If you take those 40 kilometres in Edinburgh as an example or the example you gave of Portsmouth, we are talking about 4,600 kilometres of roadway here. If my mathematics are right, that would cost somewhere in the region of £23 million or £24 million for signage alone, apart from anything else. I assume that either Mr McDevitt or some of you have had discussions with the Department about where that sort of money may come from.

Mr P Ramsey: There are clearly differences of opinion in my submission to the Committee on whether signage is appropriate in residential areas rather than have markings on the road, for example. Some groups said in their responses that road markings may be more appropriate. I made the point, though, and did not shy away from the fact that there are cost implications. I would certainly also be very clear that such costs are entirely outweighed by the social changes that would come about as a result of this.

I would also say in good faith and honourably that we can save lives as a result of this. That outweighs any cost by preventing the heartache that families across Northern Ireland will have to face, particularly in losing a child.

The Chairperson: I understand what you are saying, but have you had a discussion with the Department of the Environment about the accident statistics?

Let us face it; the vast majority of our fatal accidents are on rural roads, which would not be included in this legislation. Secondly, I hear what you say about whether signage should or should not be there, but the bottom line is that in law we cannot enforce a speed limit unless there is signage. I know that from a previous job I did. There must be signage. In fact, an enforcer has to give evidence that that signage was in place — for instance, for a 30 mph speed limit in one of our villages. They must give evidence that such signage was not turned around, was facing the right way and all the rest of it. When it comes to enforcement, signage is a must.

You, like me and everyone else around the table, regularly get complaints that, even in this day and age, the Police Service is not enforcing the 30 mph and 40 mph limits. On a daily basis, that is just simply not being done. You will see the van sitting in a few specific areas, but, quite frankly, the enforcement figures for the 30 mph and 40 mph speed limits have bottomed in the past years. You said that the PSNI had some concerns about enforcement. What were they?

Mr P Ramsey: They were no different to what you have outlined — the policing pressures that they are under daily in trying to do this. I reiterate the point that I and a number of respondents have made, which is that it takes a major change in driving culture — from driving instructors to learner drivers, right through society. It takes awareness; otherwise, there would be no point in introducing the Bill. I have cited areas of good practice, where a 20 mph zone has been introduced and where we have seen high increases in pedestrians and certainly many more cyclists. In essence, that is a positive change to society.

I come from this politically and personally, and you made the point that a lot of these accidents happen on rural roads. In my constituency, a lot of deaths occur in housing areas. My brother Ray and his wife, Michelle, were killed by a drunk driver. So, I come at road safety with a lot of personal interest as well. I chaired the all-party group on road safety when it commenced in Parliament a number of years ago. I think that it makes a change. I have seen the trauma of a family, I have seen the devastation of a family, and if we could change mind sets and that culture and awareness and education, it could save one life. I think that we are making inroads into changing society. I am very passionate about making a difference on the roads. I agree totally with you. It cannot be just all about enforcement. All

of us have a responsibility in public life to try to bring forward legislation that can enhance the quality of life. I see this legislation encouraging and promoting that as well.

The Chairperson: What about the cost?

Mr P Ramsey: I think that we have to examine it. I made the point that I will be having other stakeholder events and consultations. I will meet the Minister of the Environment and the Minister for Regional Development to get their perspective on how they see it going forward. There are a number of pilot projects across Northern Ireland. I have a list here. In fairness to the Department, there is a determination to introduce pilot schemes. They see the validity and the importance of doing that, but I see the importance of legislating for it as well. We had a terrible year this year with the loss of life on the roads, and we can make a bit of a difference in this legislation.

The Chairperson: I totally agree with you regarding anything that we can do to save lives; but other factors have to be taken into consideration. I am not trying to catch you out on anything.

Mr P Ramsey: I appreciate that.

The Chairperson: These are vital issues in terms of the costs that might be affected. I would like to hear what the Department has to say in relation to that.

Mr Hussey: It is quite clear that you are very passionate about this issue, and you deliver that very well. There is devastation in families, and I have had to deliver news to people attending scenes of accidents, and it is not a very pleasant experience at all. You mentioned that you are going to speak to the Minister of the Environment. We are in a rut at the minute in relation to new developments. Will you be putting forward a proposal that if a new development is being created, part of it would be within that zone, and they would be designing it for a 20 mph limit?

Mr P Ramsey: Yes. That would require legislation as well. The Chair spoke about traffic-calming measures. It is important that any development, particularly in a large-scale dense housing situation, must have traffic-calming measures in that scheme. We see that particularly in public housing areas now. It is a demand on the Planning Service that it introduces, and I agree with you, Ross, I think that it is important that in any legislation going forward, we ensure that new developments and high density residential housing have a requirement for reduced speeds on the roads.

Mr Hussey: The Hospital Road area in Omagh is a prime example. There is a very large area of housing, and they have introduced something similar with traffic calming throughout the area. There is a natural traffic calming in that those estates were not built for each house to have two or three cars, and with cars parked higgledy-piggledy, you have to drive that little bit slower to get around them.

One area that you did not mention in relation to a 20 mph limit was the town centre. I think that if you are going down this road — pardon the pun — town centres need to be considered. When you go to the centre of Omagh, you have a really long straight road, and some people used it as a racing track in my day. I think that it is something that needs to be considered. Is that part of your plan as well?

Mr P Ramsey: I made clear a number of the key elements of the presentation: schools and school entrances, school playing fields and provision of roads; residential roads; play parks where children are playing; unclassified roads; and city centres. In our towns — Derry is no different — we are trying to create an environment of free-flowing pedestrian flow, but it is hard when you are trying to encourage public transport into city centres. You are trying to get that dynamic right in respect of encouraging and discouraging car owners in the city centre, but in any city centre, given the volumes of pedestrian flow, we need to do our utmost to reduce the speed limits on those roads. That is a key area for me in going forward.

Mr Hussey: There is no doubt that, in Londonderry, which is an older city, you have smaller streets, where cars cannot really get their speed up. At the same time, you still have the odd moron who will try it.

Mr P Ramsey: That is a valid point. We have built heritage in the walled city. The business community wants cars in the city centre because it entices more spending power. It wants more parking in city centres. However, with increased parking, your point, Ross, is exactly right: you reduce space for car road use. I accept your point.

Mr McAleer: Pat, you are welcome to the Committee. I am approaching this with a very open mind. The arguments that were put to us last week in Edinburgh were very compelling. One of the things that they mentioned to us last week was that, as part of the scheme in Edinburgh, they have flashing lights and 20 mph restrictions at schools. We have our safer routes to school programme, which is not unlike that, apart from the speed limit. We also have our active travel strategies and our cycling unit. There is a greater emphasis on modal shift in DRD, councils and all the rest. Why can we not just tweak what we have instead of creating new legislation for all this? Why is legislation required? Unfortunately, there have been a number of fatalities in my constituency so far this year. The implementation of 20 mph zones in residential streets would not have prevented any of those deaths. Why do we need legislation when we have something that we can tweak and amend to make the place safer and get that modal shift?

Mr P Ramsey: Thank you, Declan. I appreciate your comments. The evidence that I have seen, particularly in the UK, for example, suggests that accidents have seriously reduced after legislation has been brought forward. 20's Plenty for Us is a campaign that we are all aware of. It has been going for a few decades. That campaign is supported across Northern Ireland by road safety groups. This is not just about legislation. If it were about only legislation, it would absolutely fail. We need buy-in and creative thinking about awareness from the learner driver right through to the R-plates to change people's mindset and their culture of driving. It takes much more to do that. I genuinely believe that the models that I have seen in Britain and across the world — I encourage you to look at the German model — show clear evidence of a reduction in road traffic accidents.

There also needs to be social change. We are getting to a period in which a lot of people in our community are living longer. The older population is a lot stronger and more vibrant. If anybody has their mother, father or granny still living, they know that they want to be out and about. However, there is a fear in their communities about the safety of that. It is about getting this right. Legislation will not make one iota of change unless we bring in a wealth of awareness and education and get it into the schools and road safety campaigns and all the other elements that can add great flavour to this.

Mr Ó hOisín: Thanks, Pat. Everybody has their own story to tell about road fatalities. In a very short space of time in my constituency a number of years ago, two young fellas were knocked down and killed in two separate accidents in built-up areas. There was a clamour at the time for traffic-calming measures to go in, and that happened; there were chicanes, ramps and all the rest of it. Within a very short period, there was a clamour for them to come out because of the restrictions that they were putting on the roads. What consideration is given in any of this to the local environmental impact of traffic calming, air-quality management in some areas — you know that that is a factor — and public transport? Did Translink feed into your consultation at any point?

Mr P Ramsey: I am not sure on Translink, but I will look into that. Translink, locally and maybe not officially, would be concerned about the ramps and road traffic-calming measures. It indicated to me previously, when discussing other elements, that it would prefer them not to be there. However, if you live in a huge public housing area, and I can reflect on the large private sector housing in Derry, you know that parents, in particular, get peace of mind when there is any suggestion of traffic-calming measures coming in. Ross made the point about streets where there are traffic-calming measures. It does curtail traffic. However, we need much more than that. Not every area will have traffic-calming measures. Unfortunately, as I have seen and as others will testify to, it takes a fatality before Roads Service will make that move. This is about prevention and trying to ensure that we are not waiting for fatalities to happen. It requires a big change. In the area that you represent, there is no better example than Dungiven as regards air quality. It would make a huge difference to the quality of life of those who live in the centre of Dungiven if that road infrastructure were to change. It is like an ashtray.

Mr Ó hOisín: I never thought of it that way, Pat. That is absolutely true. Colleagues who visited Edinburgh last week saw that 50% of the residential areas there already have traffic-calming measures. I know that that requirement is in place for new developments here. However, there are huge older developments, where it is a bugbear for a lot of people. The unwritten criterion is a fatality or a significant accident history before anything goes in. That has caused huge issues for the local council and at higher levels.

I understand 100% the reasoning behind the Bill, but I would like to tease out some of the details.

Mr McNarry: I am certainly in favour of anything that gets rid of those terrible old traffic cops. I think that they are the bane of my life and everybody's life. I would certainly welcome it.

The Chairperson: There's a confession.

Mr McNarry: I was not meaning that about anybody in particular. On the serious side, Pat, I wish you well with the Bill. I think that you are on to something. There are some things that you need to drill down on further. I would not mind, Chairman, if a copy of the pilot schemes was made available to all Members.

My concern is that you can have inefficient, frustrating traffic systems — this Committee knows all about it — where doing 20 mph through some cities and towns is a luxury, and you cannot even get up to 20 mph. Sometimes it is even more dangerous because you have to drive at 15 mph. You are right in what you say; most people are in a hurry, and they want to get from A to B as quickly as possible. You cannot get people out of their cars.

I have a couple of points. Why I wish you well is that I have called for 20 mph on approaches to hospitals, schools, nursing homes and shopping centres and got nowhere. Part of the reason for that was the cost and the disruption. However, the argument against that is about being preventative, and that is an area where you could actually do justice. I am not so sure on the residential roads, because you need to expand — not necessarily today — on the definition of what a residential road is and where the legislation would sit with the highway code. At times, I have to remember how many lamp posts there are and what the distance between them is etc for me to know that I am in a 30 mph zone. It is very difficult to know what a residential road is these days. The way the Department looks after the roads, you would think from the state of them that they were all country lanes. You would not really know what was a proper road and what was not these days.

On the consultation, do you see a role for the local government councils, particularly the new ones that are going to come in, and was there any feedback from the councils?

Mr P Ramsey: Thanks, David. I agree with you. In and around hospitals, sheltered accommodation and old people's homes, it would be valuable when you are trying to encourage healthier living for our older population and to involve the younger population, and it hits all the key elements in the Programme for Government, such as encouraging greater participation in walking.

You have a valid point, and I have been looking at how you define a residential area. In some of the submissions that I have received, people talk about blanket legislation and huge swathes of areas. I am not sure whether that would work. However, there is a need and a desire from those who made responses to me that it should occur in areas of high-density housing and huge public and private sector housing areas. I am holding further stakeholder events to tease that out and tie it down a wee bit more. When I meet the Department, that is one area that I will talk about.

There were limited responses from councils, but, in the event of RPA, not just the councils but the district policing and community safety partnerships have a crucial role here. We are in the one game together in trying to influence, persuade and ensure that we have a greater level of road safety across the roads, irrespective of what it is for, but I believe that the Bill can help that and move people forward. On the regulatory side, the Department of the Environment and the Department for Regional Development's Roads Service can collectively do that and make a better place for the next generation.

Mr McNarry: That would be helpful. Are there any stats, or can they be obtained, to take on the argument? How many people involved in serious accidents or how much loss of life was due to speed and exceeding the 30 mph limit? I know that one is too many, and I heard what you said about your brother, and that is a great tragedy. It does not matter what speed anybody engaging in drunken driving is going to do. They are just reckless and that is it. However, it would be interesting to know what facts we can put together for serious accidents or loss of life in the past three years due to speed being over 30 mph in a 30 mph zone in the types of areas that you are talking about.

Mr P Ramsey: That is a reasonable question, and that would add to the debate. I want to go through some stats from the Department for Transport. A pedestrian hit by a vehicle travelling at 20 mph has a 2.5% or one-in-40 chance of being killed or a 97.5% chance of surviving. That is in stark contrast to a pedestrian hit by a car travelling at 30 mph, who has a 20% or one-in-five chance of being killed and an 80% chance of survival. That is a key statistic that is hard to ignore, David, and is certainly one that I am arguing in going forward with the Bill. It would be good to see the stats for 30 mph areas — how many serious accidents occur and how many unfortunate fatalities. I would be keen to see those as well, and I am sure that the Department listening today will be seeking those stats out for us.

I have always made it clear to the Clerk, and I say it to the Committee as well, that I am keen to move forward with the membership of the Assembly — not even with political groups but with Members — to get consensus in and around this, so I am not rushing into the Chamber at Second Stage. I will be taking my time and seeking best practice and reflecting on a lot of the points that were made here today.

Mr Byrne: Pat, thanks for your presentation. I think that we all have a challenge in the modal shift towards pedestrians and cyclists. I have received complaints from people who say, "These ramps are a bloody nuisance".

Mr McNarry: What?

Mr Byrne: They say that the ramps on the road are a nuisance. However, if we are serious about road safety in residential areas, we have to do something about trying to restrict speeds.

Pat, how much time did those in Portsmouth and Bristol take to discuss this issue before they managed to bring it in? Was it the local authorities that largely drove it?

Mr P Ramsey: Councils in England have greater devolved powers, and they were the instigators of it. It was a similar situation in Edinburgh. I do not have detailed information about Edinburgh. You said that you had somebody with you, and maybe we could get a wee note about that for future reference.

Portsmouth had pilot projects —

The Chairperson: We might use that against you at a later stage.

Mr P Ramsey: *[Inaudible.]*

The Chairperson: We will get that passed on to you.

Mr P Ramsey: Portsmouth is a model of good practice, and I am sure that the Committee staff will get more detailed information on how the history of the provision evolved there. However, it is certainly a good model, Joe. Figures show that more pedestrians now use the same roads and there has been a 25% increase in the number of cyclists. That is hard to ignore when we are talking about healthier living, making social changes and people being confident and competent in using the roads when they are not in a vehicle.

The Chairperson: I have to make a very urgent call. Apologies.

The Committee Clerk: As the Deputy Chair is not here, can I take nominations for an Acting Chair?

Mr McNarry: I propose Declan.

The Committee Clerk: Are members content?

Members indicated assent.

(The Acting Chairperson [Mr McAleer] in the Chair)

Mr McNarry: Make sure that you only go at 15 mph, Declan, so that we can keep up with you.

The Acting Chairperson: You have 10 minutes to address the Committee.

Mr Hussey: There was never this bother in Omagh council.

Mrs Hale: I apologise to the Committee and to Pat for my late arrival this morning. Pat, I really admire what you are trying to do. However, I share Declan's concerns about the need for entirely new legislation, and I would maybe want to look at the powers that are already in place and whether we can modify them.

I spent seven years living in Germany, and the Germany system works. However, it works because of civic responsibility and education. When you come into a residential area in Germany, the signage is done well and people know that the speed limit is 20 mph. When you come into a city, the motorway speed limit reduces to 120 kph, to 80 kph and down again. It works, but it works through civic responsibility and education.

I wish you really well with the Minister. Hillsborough in my constituency is a village absolutely plagued by HGVs and too many cars using it as a rat run. When I speak to the Minister about traffic-calming measures and trying to reduce the traffic, his reply to me is that, until they give him a dead body, there is nothing he can do. I really hope that we do not have to offer the Minister any more bodies before he will act.

I applaud what you are trying to do, but I share Declan's concerns. Being tied up in legislation might take too long, and I think that we should look at other ways of modifying what we have. However, I wish you the best.

(The Chairperson [Mr Spratt] in the Chair)

Mr P Ramsey: Thank you for your comments. It will not be an easy task. That is true of any private Member's Bill, because you do not have a suite of departmental officials to assist you. This is your baby. You try to promote it, advise and encourage, and you hope that you can get the support of Members across the board.

You spoke about Germany. Hilden in Germany is the prime example. They introduced legislation and cycling increased by 23% as a result. However, it took legislation to change the situation. I accept your point, and if there was a better way of doing it, I would not be sitting here. The clear evidence is that the 20's Plenty system works and road safety groups across Northern Ireland, in nearly every city council area, advocate it. There are good models in Britain. You do not have to go to German. You can go to Portsmouth. I imagine that in leading up to the decision to do it in Edinburgh, they will have done research and looked at the financial implications.

I made the point to Declan that the legislation in itself will have no effect unless we change mindsets and have a culture of driver changes. We must ensure that education and awareness are part of it. The legislation must synchronise with all those elements or it will fail.

The Chairperson: OK, Pat. That is all the questions at present. Obviously, we have quite a journey to go on this yet, so we will be talking to you again in the not-too-distant future. The presentation this morning has been very helpful. We will let you have the papers about Edinburgh.

Mr P Ramsey: Thanks very much, Chair and Committee.